

Message Text

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S E C R E T PRETORIA 4355

EXDIS

LAGOS FOR YOUNG, MOOSE AND MCHENRY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN ARMED FORCES

REF: PRETORIA 4247, STATE 201258, LAGOS 9621,

1. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD LOOK AT BRIG. WESTHUIZEN'S REQUEST
AGAINST THE MOUTING SEIGE MENTALITY WHICH IS DEVELOPING IN
THIS COUNTRY AND THE POTENTIAL HARDENING EFFECT IT CAN HAVE ON
SAG'S POSITION TOWARD SETTLEMENTS IN NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA.

2. INCREASINGLY SOUTH AFRICANS BELIEVE THAT IT IS ONLY
A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY ARE BESEIGED BY A HOSTILE
WORLD. SINCE THE DEBACLE OF THEIR INTERVENTION IN
ANGOLA, THEY CONSIDER THEMSELVES TO BE ESPECIALLY
VULNERABLE TO ATTACK FROM THE QUARTER OF THEIR
MISADVENTURE. THIS IS THE MOST REASONABLE

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EXPLANATION FOR THE SIZE OF THE BUILD-UP IN NAMIBIA
WHICH FAR EXCEEDS THE NATURE OF THE SWAPO THREAT.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THE DANGER OF APPEARING TO ACCEPT THE
RELEVANCY OF CUBAN FORCE LEVELS IN ANGOLA TO THE LEVEL OF
SADF FORCES IN NAMIBIA. ANY REGULAR EXCHANGE OF
INTELLIGENCE ON CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA WOULD RUN

THIS RISK AS WELL AS PRESENT OTHER UNDESIRABLE SIDE EFFECTS FOR OUR POLICY TOWARD SOUTH AFRICA. BUT PERHAPS WE CAN AVOID THESE PITFALLS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME REDUCING THE VALIDITY OF, IF NOT REMOVING, AN ARGUMENT THAT COULD STAND IN THE WAY OF NECESSARY FLEXIBILITY ON TROOP WITHDRAWAL.

4. WE RECOMMEND THAT WASHINGTON CONSIDER THE ADVISABILITY OF A ONE-TIME RESPONSE TO VAN DER WESTHUIZEN BUILT ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES, ASSUMING OUR INTELLIGENCE SUPPORTS THIS LINE OF ARGUMENT:

-- OUR INFORMATION ON THE SIZE OF THE CUBAN FORCE, THE NATURE OF ITS EQUIPMENT, AND ITS DEPLOYMENT LEADS US TO BELIEVE THAT THEY HAVE THEIR HANDS FULL PROPPING UP THE NETO REGIME. (THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY ENOUGH SPECIFIC INFORMATION TO GIVE THE ASSESSMENT SUBSTANCE.)

-- WE DO NOT REGARD THE PRESENCE OF SADF FORCES IN NAMIBIA AS IN ANY WAY JUSTIFIED BY THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN FORCES IN ANGOLA, INDEED, IT SERVES AS A CONVENIENT PRETEXT TO JUSTIFY THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF CUBAN TROOPS IN ANGOLA AND REDUCES THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EFFORTS TO GET CUBAN FORCES WITHDRAWN.

-- THE SAG CAN BEST ASSURE ITS SECURITY IN THIS AREA
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AND COUNTER THE CUBANS BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA WHICH BY MEETING THE TERMS OF RESOLUTION 385 COMMENDS THE SUPPORT OF THE REST OF AFRICA AND THE WEST.

-- THIS NECESSARILY INVOLVES A WILLINGNESS TO WITHDRAW ITS FORCES FROM NAMIBIA AS PART OF AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT.

-- REMOVAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS SHOULD ALSO PAVE THE WAY FOR RENEWED COOPERATION IN HYDROELECTRIC AND IRRIGATION PROJECTS ALONG THE BORDER, WHICH IS SO IMPORTANT TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELFARE OF THE AREA, AND WILL IN GENERAL REINFORCE STABILITY ALONG THE ENTIRE FRONTIER.
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